

THE NAVAJO NATION CHURCHROCK CHAPTER P.O. BOX 549 CHURCHROCK, NEW MEXICO 87311 (505) 488-5949 Fax: (505) 488-6561



Ernest Yazzie, COUNCIL DELEGATE Charles S. Damon II, COUNCIL DELEGATE Vanessa Begay-Lee, LAND BOARD MEMBER

November 18, 2005

Mr. David Albright Ground Water Office Manager U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9 75 Hawthorne Street, Mail Code: WTR-9 San Francisco, CA 94105

Post-it* Fax Note 7671	Date 1172 pages Co
To D. Albright	From E. Carlisle
Co./Dept.	Co.
Phone #	Phone #
Fax (415) 947-3549	Fax #
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Dear Mr. Albright,

Church Rock Chapter of the Navajo Nation requests an extension of the comment period on the November 2, 2005, EPA notice concerning determination of the Indian Country status of the southeast one-quarter of Section 8 of Township 16 North, Range 16 West, McKinley County, New Mexico. <u>See</u>, 70 Federal Register 66402-66403. We request an extension of up to 60 days, but in no case less than 30 days.

The Chapter requests this extension to allow our leaders and residents ample time to prepare video and written comments on this important determination. Many of our residents are busy with holiday ceremonies and family gatherings, and the current comment deadline of January 3, 2006, comes too soon after the holidays to allow sufficient time to prepare comments.

The Chapter is on record as supporting Indian Country designation for the subject parcel, which is the site of the proposed Hydro Resources, Inc. (HRI), in-situ leach (ISL) uranium mine. See, letter from Johnny Livingston, Chapter President, to Ron Curry, New Mexico Environment Department secretary, July 20, 2005; attached hereto. The Chapter, which is part of the Navajo Nation and is seeking tribal certification as a local government, believes that the federal government, not the state of New Mexico, should regulate underground injection control (UIC) activities for such mining operations until the Navajo Nation receives primacy from the USEPA to implement and enforce the federal and tribal UIC programs. The southeast quarter of Section 8 is surrounded by Navajo lands or lands occupied and used by Diné people, who are the ONLY people who have continuously inhabited this community for most of the last 200 years.

Church Rock Chapter has adopted several resolutions opposing the HRI mining project and any other new uranium mining. We support the Navajo Nation's recently passed ban on uranium mining and processing anywhere in Navajo Indian Country. And as many on your staff also know, our Chapter has been conducting a comprehensive environmental assessment of residential areas affected by past uranium mining. We have documented



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November 18, 2005

Mr. Ron Curry, Secretary New Mexico Environment Department P.O. Box 26110 1190 St. Francis Drive Santa Fe, NM 87502-6110

Re: Agenda for November 28 Tour of Church Rock and Crownpoint Chapters

Dear Mr. Curry,

We have prepared the attached agenda and itinerary for your tour of Church Rock and Crownpoint chapters on November 28, 2005. As you requested, we have scheduled your tour to begin at noon at the Church Rock Chapter House and to end around 4:30 p.m. at the Crownpoint Chapter House.

Thank you for agreeing to visit our community. We look forward to meeting you and your staff.

Sincerely,

Edward Carlisle

Community Services Coordinator

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Xxc:

Johnny Livingston, Church Rock Chapter President Jamison DeVore, Crownpoint Chapter President Chavez John, Coyote Canyon Chapter President Johnny Johnson, Standing Rock Chapter President Raphael Martin, Pinedale Chapter President Lloyd Morgan, Nahodishgish Chapter President widespread contamination from these activities. These impacts, which began in the 1950s and continued through the mid-1980s, inhibit sustainable development in our community, may be adversely affecting the health of our people, and represent substantial damage to our shared Navajo resources.

We understand that the Navajo Nation Department of Justice and interveners in the HRI licensing case before the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission also seek an extension of the comment period, and we support their requests.

Please do not hesitate to contact our Community Services Coordinator, Mr. Ed Carlisle, at 505-488-5949, if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Johnny Livingston

President

xc: Louis Denetsosie, Navajo Nation Attorney General

Ron Curry, Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department

Eric Jantz, New Mexico Environmental Law Center

Johnny Livingston, Chapter President

Noon

TOUR OF CHURCH ROCK-CROWNPOINT AREA: LAND STATUS ISSUES AND URANIUM MINING PROPERTIES

For

Ron Curry, Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Derrith Watchman Moore, Deputy Secretary, NMED

Sponsored by

Church Rock Chapter, Navajo Nation

Monday, November 28, 2005

AGENDA AND ITINERARY

Assemble at Church Rock Chapter House State Route 566 and Old U.S. 66, 3.5 miles east of Gailup, New Mexico

Welcome and Introductions

Нооп	Reasons for Tour Overview of Tour	Johnny Livingston, Ed Carlisle, CSC Larry King, Church Rock resident Chris Shuey, SRIC
1 pm	Leave Church Rock Chapter House	
1:10 pm	STOP #1	Mustang Station next to Springstead Estates Housing Development
1:30 pm	STOP #2	Corner of SR 566 and Old CR Mine Road
2:15 pm	STOP #3	UNC Superfund Site, SR 566
2:45 pm	STOP #4	UNC Northeast Church Rock Mine, Red Water Pond Road
3:30 pm Travel to Crownpoint via Navajo Route 11 through Pinedale and Mariano Lake Chapters to Rocky Canyon Road; north on Rocky Canyon Road past Unit 1 allotted lands to Navajo Route 9, 2 miles west of Crownpoint; east on Rt. 9 to Crownpoint Drive; right on Crownpoint Drive		
4 pm	STOP #5	Site of proposed HRI processing plant
4:30 pm	STOP #6	Crownpoint Chapter House
5 pm	Adjourn	

THE NAVAJO NATION CHURCHROCK CHAPTER AND BOX CHURCHROCK, NEW MOUTO STRIP



Kenest Vapila, COUNCIL DELEGATA Clarica S. Dames EL COUNCIL DELEGATA Vancus Rossy-Las, LAND BOARD AGENTRES

July 20, 2006

KEN, VICK PRESEDENT

CO. SECRETARY/TREASURER

Mr. Ron Curry, Secretary New Mexico Environment Department 1190 St. Francis Orive P.O. Box 26110 Santa Fe. NM 87502-6110

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I received a copy of your March 3, 2005 letter to the USEPA Regional Administrator, and on behalf of the residents of Church Rock Chapter, I object to your department's position that Section 8 of Township 18 North, Range 16 West is not "Indian Country."

It seems to mo that you have never visited Church Rock or talked to the people here. If you had, you would know this is Navajo Country. Section 8 is surrounded by Navajo homes and grazing lands. It is contiguous to an abandoned uranium mine on Section 17, which is tribal trust land. It you would look at a land status map you would see that there is very little non-indian land in the area. Even the few perceis of state land here are leased to the SIA, which leases them to individual Navajo families for grazing uses.

Some of the lands in Church Rock that are not indian lands were used by the uranium companies, which left their westes and pollution behind when they stopped mining in the early 1980s. I live tess than a half mile west of Section 8 and I have grown up here, seeing with my own eyes the negative impacts caused by the utanium companies to our lands, sir, water and health. The elders tall me they do not want any new uranium mining because they are sick from the old mining. To support their concerns, our chapter has adopted several resolutions opposing the IRRI project and any new uranium mining. You must not have seen our resolutions so I am attaching copies for your review.

Two years ago, Church Rock Chepter received private funds to begin an environmental accessment of residential areas near and next to abundanted mines. Today, we have extensive that show that grazing lands, areas along the highways near the mines, and common-use areas where people have built homes are attll conteminated by high radiation levels. The sources of this hexardous radiation include mines and a mit that the State of New Maxico permitted or iconeed in the 1980s and 1970s.

The Navajo EPA is using our monitoring data to convince the USEPA to take the lead in requiring reclamation of UNC's Northwest Church Rock Mine. Just this past Sunday, residents of the Red Weter Pond Road area of Coyote Curyon Chapter who are affected by the UNC mine galliured at the Church Rock Chapter House to hear a preservation on the extent of contemination of tribal lands by this mine, which was abandoned in 1983. These people are angry that their children's health has been put at risk by a mining company that tell a long time ago and for many years soluted to reclaim the mine site. They british to sek their chapter to do what ours did in April: Adopted a mechation demanding notification and participation in close-up plans for the LMC mine alle. I have attached a copy of our April 17 resolution.

Your magney's position on Section 8 is counter to Navajo Nation law. The Navajo Council passed the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act (DNRPA) on April 19 by a vote of 63-10, and President Shirtey algood it into hear on April 39. DHEWA have senature saiding and proceeding anywhere in Manujo Indian Country. Your pecition that Section 8 is within state juriediction appears to us to be a very for Hill to get around Harries have. You should not be halding them do this selber, you should be supporting Hannis authority and accomingly over its own resources and people.

t don't have any memory that you called our Chapter salding for our input on your decision. Rather, you chose to adopt the company's position, not the community's. You sent a copy of your letter to HFU, but not to us. I don't know why you are taking such an and Name position, but that's what it locks like to me.

i request that you visit our community, see the lands you are taking about, and talk to the people. I can take you on a tour of the eres so you can one the stally of what we have to tive with every day — the linguing impacts of 50 years of wantum mining. Then I Stink you will change your wind and agree that Section & is "bullen Country."

Joe Shirley, Jr., President of the Navelo Nation Χc

Bill Richardson, Governor of New Mexico

Tom Udali, U.S. House of Representatives

Churchrock Chapter P. O. Box 545 Churchrock, NM 87311

Churchrock Chapters Comments regarding its Indian Country Status in response to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Act Determination; Underground Injection Control Programs for Purposes of Underground Injection Control Program Permitting.

A. Introduction

- The Churchrock Chapter is a local government organization of the Navajo Nation, which is a
 federally recognized Tribe of Indians by the Treaty of 1868 between the United States of America
 and the Navajo Nation.
- The Churchrock Chapter is authorized by the Navajo Nation Local Governance, 26 N.N.C.
 Sections 1 and 2.22 to make decisions concerning local government matters, to conduct local
 government operations, and to provide for the health, safety and general welfare of its
 membership.
- 3. The land that is identified as Section 8, Township 16 North, Range 16 West, NMPM, McKinley County, Churchrock, New Mexico is located within the exterior boundaries of the Churchrock Chapter within lands set aside for the Navajo people by the Treaty of 1868, subsequent federal legislation, executive orders, individual Indian allotments, other agreements, land exchanges involving the United States, Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Land Management, the states and the Navajo Nation or by court orders.
- 4. For federal purposes, the Churchrock Chapter is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Superintendent, Eastern Navajo Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs at Crownpoint, New Mexico, who approves or disapproves contracts, leases and other agreements, easements, permits, etc., involving Navajo Tribal trust lands, individual Indian allotments, natural resources, water and other uses of Navajo Nation trust assets, according to 25 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1 through 286, INDIANS, unless approval authority is expressly reserved to the Navajo Regional Director, Secretary of the Interior, or by other authority.
- B. Federal Government and Navajo Nation Government to Government Relationship is based upon:
 - 1. The Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce with the Indian Tribes, Article 1, Section 8, paragraph 3 of the U.S. Constitution.
 - 2. The Treaty and Agreements between the United States of America and the Navajo Nation of 1868, which terminated wars between the parties; established programs and services to meet the educational, health, social and other needs of the Navajo people and their children; recognized and permanently set aside the home land for the dependent people, which were supplemented by other grants of land by federal government legislation, executive orders, individual Indian allotments, federal and statement government land exchanges that are held in trust by the federal government for the use, occupancy and benefits of the Navajo people; and to protect and preserve their lands, natural resources, water and other assets from encroachment, abuse and theft.
 - 4. The federal court has recognized Indian Tribes as "domestic dependent nations", who are in a state of pupilage looking to the United States Government for protection, relying on its kindness and powers for relief of their wants. The court also described the resulting trust relationship as as that of a guardian to its wards, which require compliance with the highest fiduciary standards. See Cherokee Nation vs Georgia, 30 U.S. (5 Pct.) 1; 8 C. Ed 25.

- The continuing federal government programs and services for the benefit of the Navajo Nation show the Nation is federally recognized as a domestic dependent nation; and
- b. The Indian Education Assistance and Self Determination Act and other legislation recognize the Indian Nations, including the Navajo Nation, are still in a state of pupilage. These beneficial laws were enacted to help them with federal grants and contracts to promote Indian self-governance and eventual economic independence.

C. Demographics

ı.	Tribal population according to the 2000 Census		2,802
	Non-Indians Navajos or Native Americans		65 2,737
2.	Households		725
	Average household size		3.86
3.	Marital Status (Population age 15+)		1,814
	Never married	887	
	Married	680	
	Separated	98	
	Widowed	57	
	Divorced	92	
5.	Education		
	Preschool	114	
	Kindergarten	33	
	Elementary School	699	
	High School	258	
	College	167	
5.	Educational Attainment		
	Less than 9th grade	245	
	9th-12 (No diploma)	368	
	High School Grad (GED)	350	
	Some College (No degree)	233	
	Associate Degree	95	
	Bachelors	37	
6,	Employment Status		
	Labor Force	987	
	Employed	761	
	Unemployed	228	
	% Unemployed	22.9	
	Not in Labor Force	797	

7. Income (1999)

Number of Households	592
Median Household Income	19,265
Per capita Income	5,723
Male, Year round full-time	20,000
Female, Year round full-time	14,614

8. .Poverty Status (1999)

% families in poverty	42.9
% persons in poverty	40.4

9. Sources of Income (Workers)

Private business/wage	409
Government	324
Self-employed	16
Unpaid workers	12

D. Churchrock Chapter Lands

1. Geographic Location

The Churchrock Chapter is situated in the northwest quadrant of the State of New Mexico within McKinley County. The Churchrock Chapter House, Headquarters, is located about 3 miles east of the city limits of Gallup, New Mexico, north of Inter-State Highway 40, Historic Highway 66 and the Burlington-Northern and Santa Fe Railroad at 57 Telstar Road in Churchrock, NM 87311.

2. Land Status

The Churchrock Chapter has a total land base of 57,827.00 acres. Around 78% of the land, including Navajo Nation Trust lands and Individual Indian Allotments are held in trust by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs for the benefit of the Navajo Nation and individual allottees. About 10% of the land is withdrawn for the Bureau of Land Management; 6% of the land is held by private interests; and about 2% of the land is Navajo Nation fee land. We do not know whether or not the fee land has been granted federal trust status.

Section 8 of Township 16 North, Range 16 West, NMPM, McKinley County, Churchrock, NM is situated within the exterior boundaries of Churchrock Chapter within what is known as Navajo Indian Country. See Navajo Country Map (Dine' Bikeyah) in Broad Red Outline shown as "Navajo Nation".

	Acres	%
Navajo Nation Trust (Held in trust by BIA)	30,504.91	52%
Individual Indian Allotment (held in trust by BIA)	15,317.56	26%
Navajo Nation Fee Lands	124.00	2%
Bureau of Land Management	5,862.68	10%
Private - State Lands	<u>3,492,10</u>	_6%
Total	57,827.00	100%

Source: Churchrock Chapter Land Use Plan
By Architectural Research Consultant, Inc.
220 Gold Avenue SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
at page B-28 of Land Use Plan

3. Land-Uses

- . Public facilities: schools, hospitals, clinics
- Individual scattered homesites
- . Housing subdivisions
- . Churchrock Estates
- . Global Housing Subdivision
- . Navajo Housing Authority Subdivision
- . Brownsville
- . Sundance Subdivision
- . Coalmine Subdivision
- . Peretti Canyon Subdivision
- . Springstead Estates Subdivision (Project held up by Eastern Navajo Agency Health Board and Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency due to reported uranium Contamination of project site in the North Fork of Rio Puerco Valley)
- . Declared Wildlife Habitat and Open Spaces along the northern mountain ranges, Red Rock Ridge and Hogbacks by Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency
- . Road and Highway right-of-way for federal, state, county roads, bridges and school bus routes; housing and utility access roads
- . Other utility rights-of-way for electrical powerline; water and sewer lines; oil, gas and natural gaslines; fence lines; telephone lines, etc.
- . Oil, gas, natural gas and mineral mining leases and mining claims
- . Grazing permitted areas
- Windmills, water and sewer treatment plants; telecommunication transmission and radio towers
- . Red Rock State Park
- . Commercial, industrial and business leases
- . Farms, rodeo arenas, athletic fields and race tracks
- . Abandoned mine and mill sites; abandoned tailing piles
- . Dams and water catchments; earthen water tanks
- . Organizational or institutional parking areas
- . Scenic areas and sacred sites
- . Cemeteries
- Former Fort Wingate Army Base undergoing decontamination of military generated toxic chemicals and toxic waste

4. Problems

- . Declining Navajo Nation Revenues from land, natural resource leases
- . Declining royalties and other transfer payments
- . Federal budget cuts and employment
- . Rapid population growth
- . High levels of functional illiteracy
- . Epidemic levels of health problems and diseases
- . High levels of unemployment
- Inadequate supply of drinking water to meet population growth, commercial, industrial or recreational needs
- . Abuse, neglect and deterioration of the land
- . Lack of public facilities that meet basic health, safety and program standards and demands
- Lack of tax base to provide basic services: electrical power, water and sanitation systems, education, health and recreational programs

- . Growing social problems; decreasing welfare payment, increasing crime; inadequate law enforcement and judicial services to meet case loads; substandard jail facilities
- . Lack of professional and technical education to take advantage of grant programs and tourism
- . Increasing brain drain of the Nation's best and brightest young people
- Abandoned mines, tailings piles; air, soil and water contamination from toxic waste; illegal dumping
- 5. Mission; Vision; Goals and Priorities
 - a. Mission: Investing in people, land, water and natural resources
 - b. Vision: To develop a clean, healthy, progressive and safe community that values, protects, develops and preserves its families, customs and traditions, land, air, quality water and natural resources and provides equal economic opportunities for its constituents.
 - c. Goals and Priorities
 - . Improve education
 - . Improve health
 - . Manage, protect, preserve, restore and conserve the land
 - Manage, protect, preserve, conserve and find alternative sources of clean and safe drinking water for domestic, commercial and recreational uses and treated recycled water for industrial uses
 - . Promote Youth Development
 - . Promote Infrastructure Development
 - Promote Economic and Business Development
 - . Improve Public Safety
 - . Improve Public Facilities
 - Improve Community Services
- E. The Federal Government through its Various Agencies provides the following programs and services to the Navajo Nation, including the Churchrock Chapter:
 - 1. Bureau of Indian Affairs through grants or contracts:
 - . Judicial Services (civil and misdeameanors)
 - . Law Enforcement Services for Misdeameanors
 - . Social Services General Assistance; Children, Youth and Families
 - . Tribal Enrollment and Vital Records
 - . Grazing Management and Permitting
 - . Roads Construction
 - . Fish and Wildlife
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs Services retained by the Agency
 - . Administrative Offices of the Regional Director and Agency Superintendents
 - . Budgeting and Finance
 - . Contractual Services and Procurement
 - . Credit Services
 - . Property Management
 - . Facility Management
 - . Road Maintenance
 - . Leasing and Probate
 - . Real Estate Services
 - . Forest Management

- . College Scholarships and Tribal College Improvement Grants
- . Indian (BIA) schools (Wingate Elementary and High School)
- 3. Office of Minerals Management and Trust Services
 - . Trust Fund Accounting, Lease Management and Payments
- 4. Housing and Urban Development
 - . Housing Development
- 5. Indian Health Services
 - . Gallup Indian Medical Center
 - Ft. Wingate Dental Clinic
 - . Community Health Representative Program
 - Environmental Health Services Facility Inspections and on-site clinics, e.g. Diabetes Control
 - . Waterline and Sanitation System Construction
 - . Behavioral Health (Mental Health)
- 6. U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - . Economic Development Grants
 - . Agriculture capital improvement grants
 - . Animal Health Information
- 7. Administration for Native American
 - . Economic Development Grants
 - Capital Improvement Grants
- 8. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - Environmental Protection Grants
 - . Technical Assistance
- U.S. Department of Justice
 - . Law Enforcement Improvement Grants
 - Judicial Services Improvement Grants
 - Capital Improvement Grants for Court, Jail and Juvenile Facility Improvement Grants
 - . Jurisdiction over Major Crimes and Non-Indians in cases arising out of Navajo Indian Country
- 10. Administration on Aging
 - Senior Citizens Programs
 - Senior Citizen Lunch Programs
 - . Transportation Services
- 11. U.S. Department of Education
 - . Impact Aid for Public Schools serving areas with Large Indian and Military Reservations
 - . Indian Education Programs

12. Natural Resources Conservation Service

- Provide Training and Technical Assistance on Land and Water Conservation
- Farm Program Grants
- Grants for the EQPT Program
- . Watershed Protection and Conservation
- . Wet Lands Protection and Conservation

13. Bureau of Reclamation

- . Safety of Dams Programs
- . Navajo Indian Irrigation Project
- . Navajo Agricultural Products Industry

14. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

- . Flood and Erosion Control
- 15. U. S. Air Force Academy
 - . Prefabricated Housing in cooperation with Navajo Housing Authority
- 16. Department of the Interior
 - . Legal Services for Federally Recognized Indian Tribes by the Field Solicitor concerning cases involving Federal Trust Responsibilities
- F. Background and Findings of the Churchrock Uranium Monitoring Project
 - The Churchrock Chapter needs about 1,000 new homes to replace dilapidated and substandard homes that lack electricity, running water or indoor bathrooms, etc.
 - During Fiscal Year 2000, the Fort Defiance Housing Corporation built 69 new homes under contract with the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) to replace the old U.S. Army built Churchrock Indian Village which housed its employees during World War II and had been condemned.
 - The Fort Defiance Housing Corporation had another agreement with NHA to build 900-1,000
 more new homes on the Old Springstead Project Site in the North Fork of the Rio Puerco Valley
 In Fiscal Year 2001.
 - However, the Eastern Navajo Health Board and Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency Stopped the project due to reported uranium contamination of the valley.
 - 5. Since the Churchrock Chapter needs the additional housing and is required by the Navajo Nation Local Governance Act to provide for the health, safety and general welfare of its constituents, the officers decided to obtain a grant to obtain a scientific study of the area to determine the real extent of the reported uranium contamination in order to identify feasible mitigation measures or alternatives.
 - 6. During Fiscal Year 2003, the Churchrock Chapter received a \$50,000 grant from Resolved, Inc., Of Washington, D.C. for the Churchrock Uranium Monitoring Project to test for soil gamma radiation; testing unregulated windmills and wells for uranium or other toxic contamination; to test homes in the project areas for radon gas contamination; and particulate emissions from unreclaimed abandoned mines, mill sites and tailing piles.

7. The test results:

- a. Gamma radiation readings of twice background or more than twice background levels were found along New Mexico State Highway 566 and the Old Pipeline Road near the old Churchrock Mine; along Water Pond Road; and the Abandoned United Nuclear Mine and Tailings Pile, which are located close to a group of clustered Navajo homes, south of the Navajo Reservation boundary as shown on maps of the Churchrock and UNC Mines and photographs.
- b. 13 windmills and wells were tested for uranium or other toxic contamination. The UNC Friendship Windmill tested positive for arsenic contamination and was closed. The King Ranch Windmill tested positive for radium contamination and was removed for replacement. The Annie Gray and Lime Ridge Wells tested positive for uranium contamination and need to be retested to determine the extent of the problems.
- c. 77 homes were tested for radon gas. 33 tests exceeded allowable federal standards. Those that had unusually high radon readings will be retested for verification.
- d. The particulate emission monitors have been purchased and installed near the Old United Nuclear abandoned mine site. The monitoring tests will take one year or longer, depending on the results.
- e. The Eastern Navajo Agency Health Board is now seeking another grant to conduct a regional health study to determine whether the unexplained increase in are kidney diseases is related to uranium contamination.

We, the undersigned, have read the foregoing statements and affirm that they are correct and true to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Edward Carlisle,

Community Services Coordinator

President, Churchrock Chapter

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